

APHEO

ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH EPIDEMIOLOGISTS IN ONTARIO

2000 ANNUAL REPORT

TO ADVANCE AND PROMOTE THE DISCIPLINE AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE OF EPIDEMIOLOGY IN ONTARIO PUBLIC HEALTH UNITS



2000 APHEO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Brenda Guarda
Simcoe County District Health Unit

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Brenda Coleman
Elgin-St. Thomas Health Unit

OCCHA REPRESENTATIVE

Ruth Sanderson
Sudbury & District Health Unit

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

WHAT'S AHEAD FOR APHEO?

Submitted by: Brenda Guarda

The field of public health epidemiology has changed since the inception of APHEO in 1991. We've evolved into an organization of full members and affiliates who are known as advocates, innovators and promoters.

The association itself is also undergoing major changes to keep current with the changes in our membership and our role. Our strategic planning day held in April gave the group an opportunity to explore and identify major issues that require attention. Among these is our membership requirements.

Only one type of membership was available when the organization was created nine years ago – full member. Anyone wanting to become an APHEO member had

to have a graduate degree in epidemiology (or equivalent), a primary job function as an epidemiologist and be employed in a public health unit.

In 1997 a second category of affiliate member was created. This was in response to interest from people who did not meet the full membership requirements but who were interested in epidemiological issues. Affiliate members were given the right to attend meetings and receive minutes, but they were not granted voting privileges. As a result despite their growing numbers, associate members have never had a voice in determining the direction of the association.

As of 2000, our membership has grown to 70, of which 30 are full members and 40 are affiliate members. With the majority of our APHEO members non-voting delegates, the time has come to revisit our constitution and membership requirements. Questions that require discussion include: Do the current membership restrictions help or hinder the organization? Will the purpose of the organization "to advance and promote the discipline and professional practice of epidemiology" be lost with membership expansion?

No doubt there will be some interesting and lively discussions ahead and we welcome them. So stay tuned as the evolution of the Association of Public Health Epidemiologists in Ontario continues!



ONTARIO COUNCIL ON COMMUNITY HEALTH ACCREDITATION (OCCHA) REPORT

Submitted by: Brenda Guarda

Ruth Sanderson, APHEO's representative on the OCCHA Board, has been quite busy this past year. Not only has she participated on the Ontario Public Health Benchmarking Project along with members from PHRED and ALPHA, but also participated in OCCHA's Principals and Standards Committee.

OCCHA's major initiatives in 2000 include:

- Three health units applied for and successfully received accreditation awards.
- The Benchmarking Project started work on two new projects - heart health and breast-feeding. The Benchmarking Steering Committee is working to determine methods of disseminating benchmarking information.
- OCCHA continues to discuss the role of accreditation in the Accountability Framework model.
- OCCHA continues to work on and develop its website.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Submitted by: Adam Stevens

January 1, 2000 to January 4, 2001

INCOME

Balance Forward from 1999	\$	3195.70
GIC Cashed		1037.50
APHEO 2000 Conference		10790.00
Memberships 2000		1395.00
Affiliates 2000		900.00
Memberships 2001		50.00
Interest 2001		30.02

Total Income ----- \$ 17398.22

Balance	\$	5754.53
GICs		2037.50

Total Balance \$ 7792.03



APHEO 2000 CONFERENCE – SURVEILLANCE IN PUBLIC HEALTH: FROM COLLECTION TO INTERVENTION

Submitted by: Philippa Holowaty

This year's conference, **Surveillance in Public Health: From Collection to Intervention**, was a great success! There were sixty people in attendance.

The first day of the Conference began with an overview of public health surveillance by Dr. Julius Weinberg from City University in London, England. This was followed by presentations by Ed Adlaf from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health and Paul Sockett from Health Canada on data collection, Davis Balestracci from Minnesota on data analysis and finally, William Halperin from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health on the dissemination of information. The day ended with an interesting panel discussion on emerging surveillance issues. This discussion involved the invited speakers in addition to David Mowat from the Centre for Surveillance Coordination, Health Canada, Elizabeth Rael, Public Health Branch, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and Sten Ardal of the Central East Health Information Partnership as moderator. On the second day, there were seven informative presentations that addressed more local issues.

There were nine poster presentations and numerous opportunities for networking in a relaxed atmosphere. This Conference was the result of the hard work and dedication of all Organizing Committee members: Salwa Bishay, Brenda Coleman, Sherri Ennis, Meera Jain and Kathy Moran.

The Organizing Committee was grateful for the support of Health Canada and the Health Information Partnerships in bringing international speakers to the Conference. All the Best in 2001!

EXPENSES

APHEO 2000 Conference	\$	9384.79
Executive Meeting Teleconference		166.98
General Meetings		212.88
Strategic Planning		1095.00
1999 Annual Report design & send		186.88
PHIWG binders, copy, Purolate		572.69
Telephone call		24.47

Total Expenses \$ 11643.69

COMMITTEE INVOLVEMENT IN 2000

Submitted by: Brenda Guarda

Members of APHEO participated on the following committees in 2000:

1. **Asthma Surveillance Working Group (ASWG)**
 - Established September, 2000
 - APHEO member: Mary Lou Decou (Niagara)
 - Goal: provide scientific and technical expertise pertinent to surveillance regarding asthma. The ASWG will identify current and potential data sources and recommend surveillance options to serve the needs and strategies identified by the Asthma Strategy Advisory Committee.
2. **Public Health Information Strategy Advisory Committee**
 - Established spring, 2000
 - APHEO member: Sharat Doshi (Eastern Health Unit)
 - Mandate: assist in providing direction and advice to the Ministry's strategic information technology systems plan for public health.
3. **Skills Enhancement for Health Surveillance Advisory Committee**
 - Established March, 2000
 - APHEO member: Larry Chambers (Hamilton Wentworth)
 - Mandate: provide leadership, advice and direction to Health Canada's project team to help develop a distance-learning modular program in epidemiology, surveillance and information management.
4. **Masters in Health Science Community Health & Epidemiology External Advisory Committee**
 - Established: June, 2000
 - APHEO member: Brenda Guarda (Simcoe County)
 - Purpose: provide advice to the program director in matters relating to the overall direction, content and performance of the program. As well, the Committee provides advice on the relationships between the MHSc CH&E program and its participating agencies and external environment.
5. **Mandatory Programs Measurement Working Group**
 - Established: January, 2000
 - APHEO member: Mary Lou Decou (Niagara)
 - Mandate: develop comprehensive measures which will demonstrate board of health effectiveness in implementing program standards of the Mandatory Health Programs and Services Guidelines.

6. **Effective Public Health Practice Project**
 - Established: September, 1998
 - APHEO member: Mary Lou Decou (Niagara)
 - Mandate: maintain province-wide participation in the development and dissemination of systematic reviews and other related activities.
7. **Ontario Public Health Benchmarking Partnership**
 - Established: 1998/1999
 - APHEO member: Ruth Sanderson (Sudbury & District Health Unit)
 - Mandate: promote benchmarking in Ontario health units.
8. **OCCHA Principal and Standards Committee**
 - APHEO member: Ruth Sanderson (Sudbury & District Health Unit)



9. **Mandatory Program Technical Review Committees**
 - Established: November, 1999
 - APHEO members:
 - Adam Stevens (Brant)-Early Detection of Cancer
 - Brenda Coleman (Elgin St. Thomas) Reproductive Health
 - Terry Delmore (Halton)-Injury Prevention
 - Hyewon Lee-Han (Peel)-Chronic Disease Prevention
 - Mandate: review and where necessary, recommend revisions to the above-mentioned Program Standards of the Mandatory Health Programs and Services Guidelines 1997.
10. **Dental Index Survey (DIS) Protocol Working Group**
 - Established: February 1999
 - APHEO member: Ruth Sanderson (Sudbury & District Health Unit)
 - Mandate: review the goals of the Dental Indices Survey and make recommendations for revision to the Mandatory Guideline Committee.

ALPHA REPORT FOR 2000

Submitted by: Brenda Coleman

I started as APHEO's representative on the Association of Local Public Health Agencies' (alPHA) Board of Directors in the summer of 2000. I have also been sitting on the public health issues committee of alPHA since September. alPHA was involved in many activities over the past year including:

- Representation on the mandatory programs working group, the mandatory programs measurement working group, and the benchmarking partnership;
- Support for increased funding for northern health units re: immunization;
- Surveyed health units on immunization rates;
- Contracted to survey health units on cervical screening activities;
- Sought and received standing for Parts 1B and 2 of the Walkerton inquiry (purpose: to protect the name of public health);
- Review of its constitution re: membership/affiliate membership and its committees;
- Writing to Elizabeth Witmer re: the release of the provincial health status report;
- Writing/corresponding with Ministry personnel regarding many issues of importance to public health;
- Presentation of awards to health units that have become 100% smoke-free in public places;
- Workshop on water quality in Thorold on August 24, 2000;
- Presented award of merit to Dr. Murray McQuigge for outstanding leadership over the Walkerton water incident.

2000 MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Submitted by Adam Stevens

For APHEO Members and Affiliates, 2000 was a year of growth. During the year, a total of 30 members and 40 affiliates registered with APHEO at one time or another. However, some members dropped down to affiliate status during the year because of changes in their employment, and a few applicants left the association altogether for employment and personal reasons. Nevertheless, a total of 70 applicants in one year was a record number for APHEO. Like 1999, this record was the result of an increasing number of affiliates joining the association. Compared to 1999, there were three additional applications for members, but there were 12 additional applications for affiliates in 2000. Many of these affiliates were graduate students. Ever since the introduction of this category in 1997 when 13 affiliates joined APHEO, affiliate membership has practically tripled.



STRATEGIC PLANNING DAY

APRIL 13, 2000

Submitted by: Brenda Guardia

In 1999, APHEO decided that a meeting was required to review our mission statement, our vision and our future directions. A strategic planning subcommittee was formed, including Ruth Sanderson (Sudbury & District Health Unit), Philippa Holowaty (Durham Health Unit), Bob Jeffery (Northwestern Health Unit), Sandy Isaacs (Health Canada) and Lee Ann Nalezty (Thunder Bay).

The strategic planning day was facilitated by Bill Staples from the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) Associates Inc. His experience with the strategic planning process was a valuable resource for the association. At the end of the day, it was evident that we had a clearer idea of who we are, where we are going and how to get there.

Issues identified:

1. Defining the scope and value of epidemiology in Public Health.
2. Demonstrating, promoting and marketing the scope of epidemiology and how APHEO supports this.
3. Using technology to increase communication between members.
4. Building project specific partnerships
5. Getting Program Planning and Evaluation General Standard on the table and influencing it.
6. Resolving the member/affiliate status issue.

Accomplishments to date:

1. Larry Chambers has co-authored an article entitled **Toward Effective Community-Based Action: Using Epidemiological Skills in Health Surveillance for Local Public Health Practice.**
2. Two display presentations have been developed to help promote APHEO and the discipline of epidemiology.
3. The Central East Health Information Partnership has kindly established an electronic discussion group for APHEO's members and affiliates. This has heightened the ability of association participants to communicate and network with each other.
4. With the return of Mary-Anne Pietrusiak from maternity leave, the Provincial Health Indicators Working Group has re-emerged and will be meeting to finalize the draft report of the Core Population Health Indicators for Ontario.